



# Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan

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## National Elizabeth Fry Week May 2 – 8, 2005

The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS) celebrates National Elizabeth Fry Week annually. Elizabeth Fry societies across the country organize public events in their communities throughout the week.

Our goal is to enhance public awareness and education regarding the circumstances of women involved in the criminal justice system, especially those who are criminalized. We hope to challenge and gradually breakdown the negative stereotypes that exist about women who are victimized and criminalized.

National Elizabeth Fry Week is always the week preceding Mother's Day. The majority of women in prison are mothers. Most of them were sole supporters of their families at the time they were incarcerated. When mothers are sentenced to prison, they and their children are also sentenced to separation. Many women find this the most severe punishment. We try to draw attention to this reality by ending Elizabeth Fry Week on Mother's Day each year.

By focusing on the needs of women in the community and alternatives to prison, our 25 member societies hope to encourage the Canadian public to examine some productive and responsible means of encouraging community responses to addressing criminal justice matters from coast to coast. Our hope is that, particularly in times of fiscal restraint, this sort of proactive focus will encourage the development of and support for community-based options rather than costly incarceration, particularly for non-violent offenders.

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan is holding its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual *Rebels With A Cause* on May 4. Please see insert for more details.

- The cost of imprisoning a woman in a federal prison is now estimated by Corrections to average \$150,000 per year and can be higher than \$250,000 per year for women kept in the most isolated and segregated conditions of confinement.
- The cost of community-based options, such as probation, bail supervision and community supervision work orders, range from \$5 to \$25 per day.
- In 2002-2003, when the number of women in federal custody was 376, Corrections logged 264 women admissions to administrative segregation, of which 83 were for a period of more than 10 days.

- Taken from CAEFS fact sheet.

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## Coroner's Inquest into the Death of Jasmine Arcand

In January 2005 there was a coroner's inquiry into the death of Jasmine Arcand, a 34 year old mother, who committed suicide while in the Saskatoon police cells on February 17, 2004. She hung herself from the toilet flush handle. Her story is a heart wrenching case which clearly illustrates the futility of using incarceration as a tool for dealing with women and men suffering from mental illnesses.

Jasmine Arcand should never have been incarcerated in the first place since she was suffering from a mental illness brought on by her addictions and other events in her life. Evidence at the inquiry showed that when the police picked her up on February 17<sup>th</sup> they knew she had just been released from psychiatric care. They also knew she had attempted suicide once before while in their charge. When she was signed in at the police station, a red S appeared on the screen indicating that she was considered suicidal. Nevertheless, they placed her in an isolated cell without the comfort of human contact and a static camera aimed at her cell that no one had the time to monitor.

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan was present at the inquest. The Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, Kim Pate was called upon to give evidence. She noted that suicidal prisoners may become more anxious if left alone with a camera trained on them and that if the police were going to use incarceration in such cases, she recommended that a matron be present to provide the personal contact.

The jury in the Coroner's Inquest made a number of very important

recommendations including that detainees flagged as suicidal have "close contact monitoring by a human being for the first 24 hours" after their arrest and they should not be left alone in an interview room. They also recommended that the Saskatoon Police Service "consult with the Elizabeth Fry Society . . . as to the availability and feasibility of providing training on suicide "risk" determination and prevention to the Saskatoon Police Service Detention Staff." A recommendation we will happily work on with them.

However the jury's recommendations did not veer too far from the status quo. They attempted to make the current system work better. We would have preferred a more transformational approach, one that questioned the use of incarceration instead of alternatives that could more readily address and improve the underlying causes of a woman's behaviour. For example, in the case of Ms. Arcand it would have been far more reasonable to have taken her to a detox center, or placed her in a private placement home until she had stabilized. A close family member could have been called to take care of her. In addition, attention needs to be directed towards the impact of cuts to social and health services, which often put women at risk. It is not unusual for social ordering, laws and the justice system itself to come into conflict with the lives of women. This, we would argue, is exactly what happened to Jasmine Arcand.

Submitted by:

Ailsa M. Watkinson, Board Member  
Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan  
and President, Canadian Association of  
Elizabeth Fry Societies

As spring surrounds us we are often rejuvenated! There are new beginnings and renewed energy for old battles! I have taken a little time to reflect on my first several months as Executive Director of Elizabeth Fry Society. National Elizabeth Fry Week is the week of May 2-8, 2005. It is a time to re-evaluate what we are doing, share information, critique the treatment of women who are criminalized, and plan for the future. Elizabeth Fry Society staff and board tenaciously move forward under the weight of social cut backs and a multitude of barriers and prejudices that frustrate the work we do and devastate the women that we work with. More and more I am convinced the women whom we serve through Elizabeth Fry Society are so very much like the women I worked with at John Howard Society for many years, and the women I worked with at a Shelter for many years before that!

Who are these women we work with? They are the disenfranchised, the marginalized, the abused, the brutalized and the forgotten. They contend with prejudice, discrimination, poverty, racism, violence in all its forms, and isolation with childcare responsibilities. Often the women will become part of the mental health system, or cope by misusing alcohol and/or drugs or by harming themselves, some eventually act out and harm others. They become increasingly labelled and more easily dismissed than ever before.

These women of E Fry are the same women I met in the Transition House, fleeing abuse, they are the same women I met through mediation or a group run through the John Howard Society. These women have shared eerily similar experiences, faced the same difficult circumstances but finally, the women of Elizabeth Fry Society have become criminalized.

Fact sheets compiled for Elizabeth Fry Week illuminates a grim picture and connects the social phenomenon and women's experiences to their incarceration:

➤The dramatic growth of women prisoners can largely be attributed to such global phenomena as the dismantling of social and health services and programs and retreat of the state in terms of social safety net functions, combined with a simultaneous intrusion of the state in terms of surveillance, monitoring, criminalization and institutionalization. Canada reports that crime rates have been dropping since 1996 however, the fear of crime and the criminalization of women and girls have increased.

➤Eighty-two percent of all federally sentenced women report having been physically and/or sexually abused. This percentage rises to 90% for Aboriginal women. Criminalized women are far more likely to have experienced abuse than other women, and Aboriginal women are more likely than non-Aboriginal women to have histories of abuse. These experiences have devastating long term effects, which can put these women more at risk of being criminalized and then shape how they experience prison. Prison can revive controlling aspects and experiences of abuse and feelings of loss of control and power over their lives.

The circumstances in which women come to be criminalized is often ignored. Treatment and healing is often insufficient in prisons and can be in conflict with the reality of the day to day operation of penal institutions and the Corrections system. Spring time provides an opportunity for a renewal of commitment and Elizabeth Fry Week reminds us to be undaunted in our pursuit of solutions to the causes and consequences of criminalizing women, to seek solutions from our communities and in our communities for women, and to remain persistent in promoting understanding of the needs of women at risk and the responsibilities of our communities in bringing about these changes.

Submitted by,  
Caroleen Wright, Executive Director  
Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan



Sometimes equality means treating people the same, despite their differences, and sometimes it means treating them as equals by accommodating their differences.

~ Judge Rosalie Silberman Abella



## Rebels With A Cause ...

**Joyce Milgaard** – Joyce is a social activist, an author, a mother and an inspiring example of determination and strength in the face of adversity. A twenty-three year struggle to free her wrongfully convicted son consumed her life until his name was cleared in 1997. Then came the battle to win financial compensation for all the lost years, pain and deprivation. Joyce's story is an example of the unbreakable bond between a mother and her child and exemplifies the power of one.

**Martha Blum** – Martha has been active in and a staunch supporter of, the arts and theatre in Saskatoon and has passed on her passion for singing and piano to many Saskatchewan students. She published her first book in 1999 at the age of 86 and received the Saskatchewan Book Award for First Time Writers. A survivor of the Holocaust, she has overcome personal and family tragedies and historical atrocities. Martha exudes a passion and joy for life and at 92 remains a vital, undaunted loving soul.

**Barb Bowditch** – As an AIDS Educator/Activist and Community Developer, she has spent long hours of free time supporting a number of grassroots organizations for years, developing awareness to rural and urban community agencies, educational institutions and advocating for marginalized individuals and groups effecting policy development. Many have benefited from her tireless, passionate work for social justice and personal wellness.

**Janice Gingell** – Her commitment and passion is to ensure that girls and women are treated fairly by the law. Janice's dedication has been demonstrated through her paid work with Legal Aid and the Provincial Association of Transition Houses of Saskatchewan, and her volunteer work with the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund and as member of the founding board of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan in 1981. She has proved herself a tireless advocate of women, equality and the criminal justice system.

**Glenis Joyce** – As Director of Women's Studies at the Extension Division, University of Saskatchewan, Glenis has worked incredibly hard to improve the lives of all women at the University, in Saskatchewan, nationally and internationally. Glenis was instrumental in establishing the Saskatoon Women's Network over 20 years ago and set up the Saskatchewan Women's Agricultural Network (SWAN) which served as a platform for farm women. She started a group called NAGS which stands for the Nice Action Group of Saskatoon which was a small group of powerful women whose goal it was to make positive change.

**Dawn McBride** – A tireless and fearless fighter in search of equity and justice, Dawn has involved herself in her communities' activities. A tenacious and dedicated advocate for marginalized women in the justice system, she has touched the lives of many through her volunteer work with the Elizabeth Fry Society and as a lawyer in the community. Dawn has always relied on her determination and humour to get through many difficult situations and is not afraid to fight for what she feels is right.

**Bernelda Wheeler** – A life long activist and communicator, Bernelda has paved the way for First Nations women in Saskatchewan and Canada. She was the host of Our Native Land on CBC radio for ten years, during a time when there were no Aboriginal radio or media personalities around at all. She is a member of Grandmothers for Justice, a grassroots organization of grandmothers that are active in the community in bringing light to injustice in our communities.

**Beth Woroniuk** – She has been working with high risk youth in Saskatoon at EGADZ Youth Centre for the past 10 years. She has changed, impacted and saved many lives of young women and children, that for the most part are forgotten and not seen as important in our society. Beth has demanded that this high risk population be treated with respect and dignity and they all have a place in her heart.

*A rebel without a cause may be seen as naïve – a cause without a rebel on the other hand, may be seen as a cause no one is willing to risk confronting.*

*~ Phillippos*



## The Elizabeth Fry Society

Invites you to our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual *Fundraiser* ...

# ~ *Rebels With A Cause* ~

Wednesday, May 4

*Guest Rebel:* Joyce Milgaard

Cocktails 5:30pm ▪ Greek Buffet 6:30pm

Odeon Events Centre - Theatre  
241 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue South

Come celebrate with us as we honour the following exceptional women:

*Martha Blum* ♦ *Barb Bowditch* ♦ *Janice Gingell* ♦ *Glenis Joyce*  
*Dawn McBride* ♦ *Bernelda Wheeler* ♦ *Beth Woroniuk*

Silent Auction, 50/50, T-Shirts, Motorcycle Pics

ADVANCE TICKETS ONLY  
**\$35.00** (with a \$15.00 tax receipt)

▪ Rebel attire is encouraged  
but not mandatory ▪

*For tickets call: Sharon at 934-4606*



# Annual General Meeting

Elizabeth Fry Society  
of Saskatchewan

Tuesday, June 21, 2005  
6:00pm

The Refinery  
609 Dufferin Avenue

♦ Refreshments will be served ♦

Everyone welcome

For more information call 934-4606

## Judged



My mind is still focused on the days I used to be  
drugged,  
It ain't easy waking up everyday being judged,  
In the past all I did was get into trouble  
everyday,  
Just to get the money for drugs I did all day,  
Being locked up has changed my life can't you  
see,  
Or does it only take a certificate for you to

## Beauty Tips...

1. For attractive lips, speak words of kindness.
2. For lovely eyes, seek out the good in people.
3. For a slim figure, share your food with the hungry.
4. For beautiful hair, let a child run his or her fingers through it once a day.
5. For poise, walk with the knowledge you'll never walk alone.
6. People, even more than things, have to be restored, renewed, revived, reclaimed and redeemed. Never throw out anybody. Remember, if you ever need a helping hand, you'll find one at the end of your arm. As you grow older, you'll discover that you have two hands, one for helping yourself, the other for helping others.
7. The beauty of a woman is not in the clothes she wears, the figure that she carries, or the way she combs her hair. The beauty of a woman is seen in her eyes, because that is the doorway to her heart, the place where



# Thank You

to those who have made donations to the Society during the year.

St. Martin's United Church Women ~ St. Thomas More College  
Doreen Hudson ~ Ailsa Watkinson ~ Dianne MacDonald ~ Aaron Fox  
Nancy Poon ~ L & L Gravel and Ranching Co. Ltd.

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**Thank you** to the following who helped to make Christmas a special time for our clients and their families:

Nancy Poon  
Emma Mantee  
Jacky Crouter  
Dawn McCarthy  
Julia Price  
Melisa Schoeppler  
Federated Co-operatives

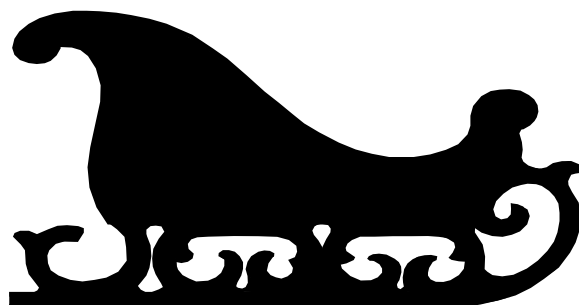
Marilyn Boechler  
Janice Gingell  
Virginia Fisher  
Elizabeth Beckhusen  
Caroleen Wright  
Frieda & Ray Grant

Cathy Bohachik  
Sharon Peterson  
Ailsa Watkinson  
Phyllis Smith  
Leslie Stadnichuk  
Jennie Ganshorn

*And ...*

To those who made donations at our annual Christmas Open House held at the Women's Community Training Residence.

**A** special thank you goes out to the staff and customers of the Saskatoon Fabutan studios for their generous support at Christmas, for the women we serve.





# MEMBERS WANTED

Members and volunteers are the bricks and mortar of every non-profit agency. Over the past several years our membership has dwindled. We know reversing this alarming trend is imperative. Issues for women in conflict with the law continue into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- ⇒ Services and programs for women are still inadequate
- ⇒ Women's prisons are filled to capacity
- ⇒ Money for community release options is lacking

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan is the only agency in the province to:

- ✓ Provide support and services to federally incarcerated women
- ✓ Operate the only halfway house for women in our province
- ✓ Advocate on behalf of criminalized women at a national level.

For over twenty years we have been a support for women across the province. Now we are asking for your support. Become a member and help strengthen our organization. Your membership provides you with voting privileges at our Annual General Meeting, and copies of our newsletters, keeping you up to date on issues concerning women and the criminal justice system.

## Membership Application

<input type="radio"/> Under/unemployed	\$ 5
<input type="radio"/> Individual	\$10
<input type="radio"/> Organization	\$25

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to support the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan  
with a donation.

\_\_\_\$10    \_\_\_\$25    \_\_\_\$50    \_\_\_\$100    \_\_\_other

Please make cheques payable to:  
The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan  
201, 165 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South    Saskatoon, SK S7K 1L8

**Board of Directors**

Cathy Bohachik	Vice-President
Merla Dyck	Member
Emma Mantee	Member
Dawn McCarthy	Member
Nancy Poon	Co-Chair
Elizabeth Smith	Co-Chair
Ailsa Watkinson	CAEFS President
Linda Wood	Member
Joanne Ure	Treasurer
Caroleen Wright	Executive Director

**Funders/Donors**

Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies  
 City of Saskatoon  
 JBL Charitable Foundation Inc.  
 Saskatchewan Law Foundation  
 Saskatchewan Learning  
 Proud member of the Saskatoon United Way

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The Elizabeth Fry Society has earned revenue by providing services for Saskatchewan Justice and Correctional Services Canada. Our fund-raising activities, your memberships and charitable donations also assist us in continuing to provide programs and services for women at risk.

***Mission Statement***

The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan is committed to working with women in conflict with the law. Recognizing unique problems derived from their position in society, we strive to provide programs and services which ensure fair treatment and encourage an end to recidivism. We support humane solutions occurring within and from the community.

**The Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan  
 and Amalgamated Charities Inc...**  
*working together to raise funds for the Society*

**Upcoming Bingo dates are:**

- Friday, Apr 29th, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 18th, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, May 20th, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, May 27th, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.
- Friday, Jun 10th, 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.

Bingo revenue is used to maintain the Elizabeth Fry Society's office, print our newsletters and accept collect calls from women in crisis and women in prison, where phone systems permit collect calls only.



**Contact us at:**

Elizabeth Fry Society of Saskatchewan  
 201, 165 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South  
 Saskatoon SK S7K 1L8

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